

the vestry of any parish or separate congregation, whether heretofore formed under the original Vestry Act of 1798, Chapter 24, prior to the effective date of the Constitution of 1851, or any separate congregation, formed under the law regulating the formation of religious corporations generally, from voluntarily accepting the terms and provisions of this subheading, and electing to be bound and governed by its provisions, upon the adoption of a resolution by a majority vote of the vestry of such parish or separate congregation, approved by a majority of qualified voters at the next annual or special congregational meeting called for the purpose, notice of either of which said meetings shall be given pursuant to the provisions of § 300 (a) of this subheading.

(e) Rights of ecclesiastical authority as to ecclesiastical affairs not impaired.

Nor shall this subheading be construed to impair the right of the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese of Easton to act in all matters pertaining to the ecclesiastical affairs of the diocese.

312. Applicability of original Vestry Act.

Except as to those parishes formed prior to the effective date of the Constitution of 1851, and except as to separate congregations heretofore incorporated which do not voluntarily accept the terms and provisions of this subheading and thus do not elect to be bound and governed by its terms and provisions, Chapter 24 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 1798 and all acts or parts of acts amending said Chapter 24 shall hereafter not apply to parishes and separate congregations of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Easton within the nine Eastern Shore counties of Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Talbot, Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, and Worcester. Provided, however, that nothing in this subheading shall affect the corporate existence of, or the validity of any proceeding heretofore taken by, or the title to any real or personal property belonging to, any corporation formed or organized under the provisions of said Chapter 24 of the Acts of 1798, as amended from time to time; and further provided, that nothing in this subheading shall affect the corporate powers of the convention of the Diocese of Easton granted by Chapter 23 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 1870 and the amendments thereto.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 1976.

Approved April 1, 1976.
